

AMHERST COLLEGE, LAWRENCE  
OBSERVATORY  
(The Octagon, the Woods Cabinet)  
Amherst College, off Rt. 116  
Amherst  
Hampshire County  
Massachusetts

HABS NO. MA-1233

HABS  
MASS,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS AND  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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MASS,  
8-AM  
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ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE Massachusetts	COUNTY Hampshire	TOWN OR VICINITY Amherst
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) AMHERST COLLEGE, LAWRENCE OBSERVATORY		HABS NO. MA-1233
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE The Octagon, the Woods Cabinet		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) Amherst College, Off Rt. 116		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1847-48 (S. King, The Consecrated Eminence)	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) (Henry Russell Hitchcock, Henry A. Sykes Architecture 19th & 20thC)	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) The observatory was the first building erected by the college exclusively for scientific pursuits.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Italianate- octagon		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) stucco over brick		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) Octagon with wings		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED)		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES 1855- Geology lecture room added 1857- Southwest wing added 1934- Dome in ceiling and exterior balustrade added		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Good condition; now used as a meeting area.		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) Amherst inventory #208		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Massachusetts Historical Commission		DATE 5/3/88